Line Management Guide

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Overview

Your line strategy is vital to your team's success and the customer's waiting experience. Organization and consistent engagement are critical to a great first impression of Apple. In order to deliver the best experience, use the guidance in this material for your store's strategy.

Line Management goals:

- Stay on time with reservation customers.
- Make customers feel informed on what to expect.
- Prepare customers for their purchase.

Line Management Team

Assemble your team, meet prior to launch, review strategies and prepare for Launch day.

- Line Management Team members should have group command skills, be customer-focused, have strong decision quality, and understand Concierge and our reservation systems.
- Consider using employees that work On-Point at the Genius Bar.
- Review the responsibilities below and assign people to a position.
- When you meet, discuss how you might cap the walk-in line, if needed.

Line Manager

Zone a Manager to be responsible for the overall line experience. This position ensures we honor time commitments made to Reservation customers and keep Walk-In customers informed. They manage the flow, balancing employee coverage and customer inquires, both essential to delivering a great experience.

Goal: Stay on time with Reservation customers.

Line Manager leads the team in the following:

- Ensures customers are greeted promptly and guided to the proper area.
- Ensures adequate On-Point coverage at all times.
- Monitors Concierge to see that customers are being marked as "**Here**".
- Watches check-in times and remaining Reservation customers waiting.
- If running behind on reservations, Line Managers make the decision to pause helping Walk-In customers.
- Monitors Walk-In inventory, ensuring Walk-In customers get accurate information.
- Communicates with LOTF to ensure all available resources are maximized.

Check In

The Check-In team helps ease customer anxiety by keeping them up to date. Keeping customers informed is critical, and it may sound a bit different depending on if you are talking to a Walk-In or Reservation Customer. How you divide up check-in responsibilities will vary, depending on the size of your store.

This team is responsible for welcoming customers, confirming reservations, positioning options for Walk-In Customers, and validating customers are prepared for purchasing or upgrading.

Goal: Customers feel informed on what to expect.

Responsibilities:

- Consistently engage with customers in the beginning, middle, and end of each line.
- Marks every Reservation **"here"** in Concierge, as soon as they enter the line.

- Discuss the time window experience with Reservation customers.
- Manage customer expectations on wait time. Reservations will be helped within the reservation time window, not necessarily at the start of their reservation time.
- Inform Walk-In Customers of stock status and offer alternatives if necessary.
- Engage waiting customers, to ensure awareness of our accessories, services and programs.
- Issue In-Store Reservations for Walk-In customers as directed by the Line Manager.
- Validate customers have all necessary information to buy their product (Identification, Eligibility, Authorized User etc.)

> **What it sounds like:**
> *"Are you here for a product reservation today? Can I check you in, or look up product availability for you?"*

Match Up

A team of employees responsible for the transition of waiting customers to a team member working in the Product Zone, keeping the Line Manager updated on line progress, and taking the time to learn about the customer.

Goal: Prepare customers for their purchase. Validate upgrading customers have backed up their device.

- Inform customers about Apple Branded accessory options.
- Share customer details with the team members to create a personalized introduction.

> **What it sounds Like:**
> Match Up. *"You'll be paired shortly. Thanks for your patience. Are you all ready to upgrade? Have you taken a look at our newest accessories?"*

Store Operations

Store Operations	**Prior to Launch Day**: Partner with your property manager to discuss your stores plan if customers begin queueing prior to 6:00a.m. **Launch Day:** Two lines- Pre-Order Reservations and Walk-In customers. 8:00 a.m. open for Launch product sales, 10:00 a.m. for business as usual **Day two and beyond:** Normal open time. Same-day time windows are available at 8 a.m.
Transaction Times	Employees should assist 5-7 customers per hour, on average
Time Windows	**Check-in Time Windows:** 30 min increments **Last Time Window:** 30 mins prior to closing
Apple Pickup	Time Windows On. All standard Apple Store Pickup conditions apply.
In-Store Reservations	**Launch Day**: These reservations expire at end of day. **Day Two and beyond:** Expire 3 hours after the selected pick up time.

Launch Day Timeline

6:00 a.m. Welcome

Separate customers into two lines: one for Reservation customers (by their check-in time) and another line for Walk-Ins (first come, first served basis). Do not create any additional lines.

- Complete check-in for all customers who have a reservation.
- Inform customers in walk-in line when your team will issue ISRs.
- Designate a Check-In team member to remain at the end of the line. Distribute food and beverage to waiting customers.

- If coverage allows, leverage Creative and Creative Pros to engage the line with demos.
- As a reminder, do not bring new products out to the line before we have welcomed our first customers at 8 am.

7:15 a.m. Begin Issuing In-Store Reservations (ISR) for Walk-Ins

- Use Concierge to issue in-store "Wait in Line" reservations for available inventory to the number of customers your store could assist in 30-40 mins.
- Since store team size and speeds vary, consider using the same number of customers that are in your first reservation time window.
- Mark "Wait in Line" customers Here and keep them in the Walk-In line.
- After issuing your first small batch of reservations, pause. Let other Walk-In customers know you'll issue more reservations after the doors open.
- Reduce their anxiety by letting them know we have inventory for Walk-In customers and are just trying to balance the influx of customers with resource availability.
- At 7:45, the line management team should be done issuing the first batch of ISRs.

8:00 a.m. Open Doors

- Begin clapping in first half of reservation customers, or more if staffing permits.
- Make pairing with a team member seamless by having a Match Up team member pair customers with team members at the end of the clap in line.
- Genius Bar team members begin addressing customers seeking Genius Bar support as Walk-Ins.
- Once complete with the majority of your 8am reservations, begin assisting some Walk-In customers from the first batch of ISRs issued.
- As you begin assisting customers from the Walk-In line, issue another set of "Wait in Line" ISRs using the same principles as the first set.
- At this time, check in with the Line Manager to update the estimated wait time shared to Walk-In customers.

9:15 a.m. Velocity Check

Using a physical count of customers in the Reservation line, confirm those marked in Concierge as "Here" with the number remaining in the queue for 9 am Check In window. If your count does not match, remind team members at Check-In and Match Up to use Concierge to keep track of customers and mark them as "Here" as they arrive.

- **Is the Reservation line running on time?** Resume issuing ISRs for Walk-Ins and continue until no more time windows are available. Offer customers the option to wait in line, or leave and return to the Reservation line with a reservation time later in the day. If the wait time will most likely exceed to amount of time the customer is willing to wait, it is best to issue them a reservation at a later time.
- **Is the Reservation line running behind?** Pause assisting all Walk-In customers until you are back on time with Reservation customers.

10:00 a.m. and beyond

- At 10a.m. the store doors open to business as usual customers.
- Continue issuing ISRs and offering Walk-In customers the option to wait in line, or leave and return to the Reservation line at a later time.
- Once all your store's available time windows are taken, the "Overflow" feature can be used to continue to reserve product. Always partner with your Leader on the Floor before using Overflow, to ensure you'll be able to help all customers.

Throughout the Day

- Reservation customers should be helped during their time window. Do not alternate between the two lines evenly, or your Reservation line will run behind.
- If you pause the Walk-In line for more than a few minutes, inform waiting Walk-In customers right away. Continue to share this with customers as they join the Walk-In line.
- Ensure Check-In team members help customers in every part of the line stay informed, not just customers at the beginning of the line.

Tools to Manage Lines

Concierge is the primary tool that will help your team manage lines. Review the Launch Systems User Guide and Launch System Videos for more details and to prepare your team.

Q-Count App will not be used this year.

Using In-Store Reservations (ISRs) Effectively

In-Store Reservations are tied to staffing. Whether the customer chooses to Wait In Line or return later in the day, Concierge accounts for each customer by decreasing the remaining availability as reservations are issued throughout the day.

On Launch morning, refrain from issuing all available ISRs to walk in customers at once. Issue them in batches that align with each time window.

After confirming you have the product the customer desires, the team member should set expectations about wait time. "Let me go ahead and hold that product for you. It'll be about a [x] wait time. Is that okay, or would you prefer I reserve a specific time for you to return later today?"

- Customers issued "Wait in Line" ISRs should remain in the walk-in line as they do not have a time commitment. Continue to set their expectation and keep them informed.
- Alleviate Walk-In customer anxiety when you pause issuing more ISRs by informing them when you anticipate issuing more.
- When wait time exceeds the amount of time the customer is willing to wait, offer them an ISR with a time window later in the day. Upon their return, they can join the Reservation line.
- For customers buying more than one product or different launch products, create an ISR for each product, up to the limit for that product family.
- Once all your store's available time windows are used, the "Overflow" feature can be used to continue to reserve product. Always partner with your Leadership Team before using Overflow, to ensure you'll be able to help these customers.

Supporting Reservation Customers

- Timely Assistance is their top priority.
- Set the expectation they should be seen within the reservation time window, not necessarily at the start of their reservation time.
- Update customers every 10-15 minutes. Keep them informed as conditions change.
- If running behind, pause helping Walk-In customers until your Reservation line is on time.
- Reservation expiration times in the chart above.

Customers Arriving Outside Their Time Window Reservation (Early/Late)

- Help customers who arrive early or after their reserved time window as long as it doesn't affect other customers who arrived on time.

Customers with multiple reservations

- They may pick up all products at their earliest reservation time. Be transparent, explain that Walk-In customers are assisted throughout the day as employees are available, and that we are also assisting customers who made reservations.
- Provide Walk-In customers with accurate estimate of wait time, inventory availability information, and frequent updates should things change.

If customers are still waiting and all time windows are booked but inventory is still available, partner with your manager to determine if you should use the Overflow feature.

Engaging with Customers

We set the tone for a great customer experience as soon as a customer joins one of our lines. We also know that the best experiences happen when customers learn something new. Employees should feel confident and be passionate about what they share with our customers. Help them curate their own set of line engagement conversations. Some ideas to get you started are:

The Basics

- Upgrade Readiness. Ensure they have their carrier passwords and double check eligibility.
- Is your data safe? Do they have their device backed up to iCloud ?
- Have you checked they are listed as an authorized user with their carrier?
- Do they know their Apple ID and password?
- Are they familiar with Trade Up?
- Have they seen the new range of colors and materials of Apple Branded accessories?

Our Services

- Have you activated your Apple Music trial yet?
- Do they currently use Apple Pay? Use apple.com/applepay to answer security questions.
- Show them how Siri can make messaging on the go a breeze.

Going Further

- Have they attended a Today at Apple session?
- Do you know how to see the schedule, sign up, and what to expect? Take them to the website It's mobile optimized and they can start exploring while waiting.
- Are they aware of the Apple Store app and the Apple Support app? Both great options for customers to continue their engagement with Apple Retail.

Capping the Line

We cap Walk-In lines to respect the time of customers we can't help and only when necessary.

- Always partner with your Market Leader prior to capping your line.
- Because capacity is not an exact science, use caution when capping your line to avoid unnecessarily disappointing customers.
- A manager must address the line: "At this time, we've reached our capacity and can't guarantee you will be helped today. We can help you place an order or check to see if the product you want is available at another store."

Get a Sense for How Many Customers You Can Help

Use the Time Window Commitments tab in the Pickup Dashboard in GBI to understand your resource availability for Walk-In customers.

Beyond Launch Weekend

As long as you have a line, regroup with your line management team daily. Our goal is to honor customers' time by reducing waiting as much as possible.

- Remove stanchions as soon as lines disperse.
- Whenever possible, avoid queuing customers outside the store during opening hours.
- Refer to the Store Operations Chart when same-day reservations will be available each day
- If there's a queue in the days after Launch, acknowledge it before store opening.
    - Reservations: Group by time window. Mark customers "Here" to track progress.
    - Walk-In Customers: Issue In-Store Reservations based on Line Manager guidance.
- If products are not available:
    - Share all the ways to secure products with the customer. Use Apple Store app or Apple.com in line to help customers place an order.
    - If they prefer to buy in-store, let them know reservations can be made online starting at 8:00 a.m. each day.